

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Guy R Gosnell on March 27, 2009.

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

In the claims:

1. (Currently amended) An automated method of assessing readiness of a fleet of aircraft comprising:

receiving at least one mission request including a date and a number of aircraft; automatically determining relative states of readiness of a plurality of aircraft of the fleet with a ~~computer processing element~~, wherein determining the relative states of readiness comprises automatically analyzing maintenance information associated with the plurality of aircraft with the ~~computer processing element~~ to determine the relative states of readiness of the plurality of aircraft on the date of the requested mission, wherein determining the relative states of readiness further comprises determining the relative states of readiness based upon an intensity function appropriate for the type of process that describes a probability of failure of the aircraft following completion of maintenance operations; and

identifying aircraft with the ~~computer processing element~~ that are able to perform the requested mission and providing, via the ~~computer processing element~~, respective

measures of the relative states of readiness of the aircraft identified to be able to perform the requested mission.

2. (Previously presented) A method according to Claim 1 wherein identifying aircraft that are able to perform the requested mission comprises identifying the aircraft having the greatest likelihood of completing the requested mission.

3. (Previously presented) A method according to Claim 1 further comprising proposing a modification of the mission request in order to increase the relative states of readiness of the aircraft able to perform the modified mission in comparison to the relative states of readiness of the aircraft able to perform the requested mission.

4. (Canceled)

5. (Canceled)

6. (Currently amended) A computer program product for assessing readiness of a fleet of aircraft, the computer program product comprising a computer-readable storage medium having computer-readable program code portions stored therein, the computer-readable program code portions comprising:

a first executable portion for receiving at least one mission request including a date and a number of aircraft;

a second executable portion for automatically determining relative states of readiness of a plurality of aircraft of the fleet, wherein said second executable portion is also configured to automatically analyze maintenance information associated with the plurality of aircraft to determine the relative states of readiness of the plurality of aircraft on the date of the requested mission, wherein the second executable portion is further configured to determine the relative states of readiness by determining the relative states of readiness based upon an intensity function appropriate for the type of process that describes a probability of failure of the aircraft following completion of maintenance operations; and

a third executable portion for identifying aircraft that are able to perform the requested mission, wherein said third executable portion is also configured to provide respective measures of the relative states of readiness of the aircraft identified to be able to perform the requested mission.

7. (Previously presented) A computer program product according to Claim 6 wherein said third executable portion is further configured to identify the aircraft having the greatest likelihood of completing the requested mission.

8. (Previously presented) A computer program product according to Claim 6 further comprising a fourth executable portion for proposing a modification of the mission request in order to increase the relative states of readiness of the aircraft able to perform the modified mission in comparison to the relative states of readiness of the aircraft able to perform the requested mission.

9. (Canceled)

10. (Canceled)

11. (Currently amended) A system for automatically assessing readiness of a fleet of aircraft comprising a processing element configured to receive at least one mission request including a date and a number of aircraft, said processing element also configured to automatically determine relative states of readiness of a plurality of aircraft of the fleet based upon an automated analysis of maintenance information associated with the plurality of aircraft to determine the relative states of readiness of the plurality of aircraft on the date of the requested mission, wherein said processing element is configured to determine the relative states of readiness by determining the relative states of readiness based upon an intensity function appropriate for the type of process that describes a probability of failure of the aircraft following completion of maintenance operations and wherein said processing element is further configured to identify aircraft that are able to perform the requested mission and provide respective measures of the

relative states of readiness of the aircraft identified to be able to perform the requested mission.

12. (Previously presented) A system according to Claim 11 wherein said processing element is further configured to identify the aircraft having the greatest likelihood of completing the requested mission.

13. (Previously presented) A system according to Claim 11 wherein said processing element is further configured to propose a modification of the mission request in order to increase the relative states of readiness of the aircraft able to perform the modified mission in comparison to the relative states of readiness of the aircraft able to perform the requested mission.

Claims 14-19(Canceled)

20. (Currently amended) An automated method of assessing readiness of a plurality of repairable systems comprising:

receiving at least one system allocation request including a date and a number of systems to be allocated; and

automatically determining relative states of readiness of the plurality of repairable systems with a computer processing element, wherein determining the relative states of readiness comprises:

analyzing maintenance information associated with the plurality of repairable systems with the computer processing element to determine the repairable systems that will be operational on the date of the requested system allocation; and

determining, with the computer processing element, respective measures of the relative states of readiness of the repairable systems that will be operational on the date of the requested system allocation based upon respective probabilities of failure of the repairable systems following completion of the maintenance operations, wherein determining the respective measures of the relative states of readiness of the repairable systems comprises determining respective measures of the relative states of readiness

of the repairable systems on the date of the requested system allocation based upon an intensity function appropriate for the type of process that describes the probability of failure of the repairable systems.

21. (Original) A method according to Claim 20 further comprising identifying systems that will be operational on the date of the requested system allocation.

22. (Original) A method according to Claim 21 further comprising providing the respective measures of the relative states of readiness of the repairable identified to be operational on the date of the requested system allocation.

23. (Original) A method according to Claim 21 wherein identifying systems that will be operational on the date of the requested system allocation comprises identifying the systems having the greatest state of readiness on the date of the requested system allocation.

24. (Original) A method according to Claim 21 further comprising proposing a modification of the system allocation request in order to increase the relative states of readiness of the systems identified to be operational on the date of the modified system allocation request in comparison to the relative states of readiness of the systems identified to be operational on the date of the original system allocation request.

Claims 25-29(Canceled)

Allowable Subject Matter

2. Claims 1-3, 6-8, 11-13 and 20-24 are allowable

Reasons for Allowance

3. The following is an Examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

The closest prior art is Monk et al (US Patent No. 5,614,896). Monk et al disclose a weapon station testing system for testing the mission readiness of an aircraft weapons system having a plurality of weapon stations including a first weapon station and a second weapon station. However, Monk et al fail to teach or suggest determining the relative states of readiness based upon an intensity function appropriate for the type of process that describes a probability of failure of the aircraft following completion of maintenance operations as recited in independent claim 1.

The closest prior art is Monk et al (US Patent No. 5,614,896). Monk et al disclose a weapon station testing system for testing the mission readiness of an aircraft weapons system having a plurality of weapon stations including a first weapon station and a second weapon station. However, Monk et al fail to teach or suggest determine the relative states of readiness by determining the relative states of readiness based upon an intensity function appropriate for the type of process that describes a probability of failure of the aircraft following completion of maintenance operations, as recited in independent claim 6.

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probability of failure of the aircraft following completion of maintenance operations, as recited in independent claim 6 and 11.

The closest prior art is Monk et al (US Patent No. 5,614,896). Monk et al disclose a weapon station testing system for testing the mission readiness of an aircraft weapons system having a plurality of weapon stations including a first weapon station and a second weapon station. However, Monk et al fail to teach or suggest wherein determining the respective measures of the relative states of readiness of the repairable systems comprises determining respective measures of the relative states of readiness of the repairable systems on the date of the requested system allocation based upon an intensity function appropriate for the type of process that describes the probability of failure of the repairable systems, as recited in independent claim 20.

Conclusion

4. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

a. Spira et al (US Patent No. 7,269,569) disclose a method for providing maintenance services.

b. Dialog (Aviation Improvements) discloses a method for support for aircraft equipments.

c. Dialog (Aerospace Flight Dynamics) discloses a project management support system for aircrafts.

d. Bard et al (Optimization aircraft routing in response to groundings and delays), discloses a method reconstructing aircraft routing in response to delays.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Romain Jeanty whose telephone number is (571) 272-6732. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Thurs 7:30 am to 6:00 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Bradley Bayat can be reached on (571) 272-6704. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Rj/
April 12, 2009

/Romain Jeanty/
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3624

